

ONE PENNY:

SHOULD
CHRISTIANS
BE
SOCIALISTS?

The Question Reviewed

BY

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AUTHOR OF

"Should the Liberal and Labour Parties Unite?"

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SHOULD

CHRISTIANS

or

SOCIALISTS?

by

OSCAR WILSON

L. BENTLEY SWANWICK

Should Christians be Socialists ?

“ The Life of Christ is the great example of human perfection.”

Philip Snowden.

“ Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you FREE.”

Jesus.

“ God sends His teachers into every age,
“ To every clime, and every race of men,
“ With revelations fitted to their growth
“ And shape of mind, nor gives the realm of Truth
“ Into the selfish rule of one sole race :
“ Therefore, each form of worship that hath swayed
“ The life of man, and given it to grasp
“ The master key of knowledge—reverence—
“ Infolds some germs of goodness and of right.”

James Russell Lowell.

Influence of Christianity.

It is my purpose in raising this question to assume the accuracy of the New Testament story. I think our purpose will be best served by frankly acknowledging the tremendous influence for good exercised by Christians in all ages. To deny it would be folly. On the other hand, to argue that without Christ the world had been dammed would involve us in a mesh of theological speculation. I have no desire to confuse the issues by pursuing either course. I am quite satisfied to admit,—for the sake of argument at any rate—that Mary's Son was of divine origin. Generally speaking, the question of His divinity does not affect the purport of His teachings. In a few isolated cases, of course, it determines the truth or untruth of human conceptions ; but in the great majority of latter day interpretations of the gospel, the story of the virgin birth is only a minor element in the calculations of religious theorists. As I have already stated,

The position of Jesus Unique.

however, I think it will be advisable under present circumstances to concede the truth of Christian teaching, for if you grant everything Agnostics are disposed to say against the church, there still remains the great historical fact, that the erstwhile despised and rejected Carpenter of Nazereth occupies a unique position in human affairs. Whatever may have been the effect of our enlarged understanding on particular dogma, the name of Jesus Christ is still very close to the human heart.

Christian Socialists.

The question, then, of should Christians be Socialists seems to me to be one of the most interesting inquiries in the realm of speculation. At various times we have heard a good deal about Christian Socialism, but it would be as well to understand from the first that Socialism does not gain by prefixing an adjective of any description. I do not say it will lose ; but it does not derive any advantage. It would be just as reasonable to talk of

Christian Liberalism, Christian Republicanism, Christian Anarchy, or Christian Monarchy. Socialism is a political ideal that is not in any sense dependent on the acceptance of Christianity; or any other creed that serves men for a religion. It is no more identified with Christianity than it is with Buddhism or with Atheism. Christ was not a Socialist: at least He never called Himself such. But on the other hand He never called Himself by the name of any of the various sects that claim exclusive right to represent Him.

Religious tests not Applicable. It would perhaps be as well to acknowledge that we Socialists—or at least the greater number of us—are not very much concerned about our theories being in harmony with the gospel of Christ. We are naturally pleased to find it is so; but our chief concern is that it should be in accord with the noblest instincts of humanity. A religious test is not applied. It is quite possible for a man to be an Atheist and yet a good Socialist. It is equally conceivable that a man should be a devout Christian and at the same time endorse the Atheist's political creed. But the Atheist differs from the Christian in so far that he need not be a Socialist. He can be an Atheist and be an exploiter. He can make his Atheism harmonise with any kind of brutal indifference to the welfare of others he chooses to adopt. The policy of every man for himself and perdition take the hindmost can quite logically become the guiding principle in the conduct of one who refuses to acknowledge any power higher than the instincts of self preservation. It is not often it happens so: Atheists are, I believe, as a rule, men of commendable habits. But it quite easily could be so and yet a man's conduct be consistent with his notions of religion.

Christians already Pledged. On the other hand, the man who believes in Christ has accepted a certain ideal as the desired goal of humanity. He believes already in certain specified teaching, and if he is sincere, he desires to reach the goal by the shortest possible route. It becomes his duty therefore to strive to that end with all the force of his being. Should society place an obstacle in the way of its attainment he should seek to remove it. Should a custom, however ancient or respected, hinder his progress, it must be superseded by another more compatible with his aspirations. I think I need scarcely labour this argument. Its truth should be obvious to all of us. If a theory is true it is worth struggling for. If it is not true it ought to be discarded.

The cardinal point. Before we attempt to prove that Christians should or should not be Socialists it is essential that we should thoroughly understand what Socialism is. It is clear that unless it can be proven that Christ's notion of perfected human society is the same as that of the Socialist it does not logically follow that the Christian should be a Socialist. If Jesus upheld Monarchical government

and Socialism entails the foundation of a republic, the two ideals are conflicting. That is patent. If Christ believed in the need for a rich class, and Socialism aims at communism,

What is

Socialism.

Christianity and Socialism are at variance. Let us endeavour to find out then what Socialism is. There are various ways of defining it. "Each for all and all for each" is a popular one, but not sufficiently distinct for our purpose. "The public control of the means of production, distribution, and exchange," is another definition not less hackneyed. These are perhaps as good as any, but paradoxical as it may be I have no hesitation in saying that the more a man realises what Socialism is the more convinced does he become of the difficulties of definition. Socialism is a progressive idea, and the method of its application will be as varied as the various circumstances that will make demand for it. Socialism does not presume to supply a cut and dried scheme of government. Presupposing a public intelligence commensurate with the moral and scientific unfolding of truth, we naturally assume that posterity will be much better able to grapple with the difficulties arising after we have gone than if it were handicapped by the enactments of dead statesman.

"The world advances and in time outgrows
 "The laws that in our fathers' day were best;
 "And, doubtless, after us, some purer scheme
 "Will be shaped out by wiser men than we,
 "Made wiser by the steady growth of truth."

Socialism

and

Authority.

The idea then that Socialism is pledged to any particular scheme of things is a fallacious one. Socialism seeks to uphold authority, not to overthrow it. Socialism is not Anarchy. It is not related to it. The belief that Anarchy is an advanced stage of Socialism is erroneous. They have nothing in common. Socialism would respect authority, but it must be an authority founded on the people's will, and according to their collective wisdom. It must be an authority that is not resting on the unequal distribution of wealth. It must be an authority founded on a common desire. The intelligent Socialist will not quarrel about the form of government if it secures all men equal access to things needful, and equal opportunities for the attainment of social honour and distinction. "A rose by any other name is bound to smell as sweet," is a trite but true saying. It applies here. The question of government is a secondary one. Everything hinges on the principle, and the principle of Socialism demands that society shall automatically prevent the strong from taking advantage of the weak. It holds that all men should render society service according to their capabilities, and receive from society according to their needs. It seeks to render possible the realisation of the time when we may do unto all men as we would they should do to us without the consequences of being exposed to the injuries that may be inflicted by the unscrupulous.

**Christ's
Teachings the
plumbline.**

The real question, therefore, is by what manner of reasoning are we to arrive at the conclusion that the gospel of Christ intends a similar consummation; and the answer is that the teachings of Jesus point with hopefulness to a time when men shall live upon this earth in brotherly love and sympathy. As one capable writer puts it, "His teachings form the plumbline to which we must build or perish." And one might easily add that there it swings yet—as it has done throughout the centuries—showing no signs of decomposition, and suspended from the clouds. A thousand churches have been built around it, but not one of them is built to it. Some of them, like the leaning tower of Pisa, are miracles of architecture, but they are more the result of accident than ingenuity.

**The
Sophistry of
the Church.**

What is well has always been a convenient excuse for inaction amongst the churches, and a plea that the established order of things might be allowed to continue. They have ever taught that the millennium could only be reached by means of a cataclysm, that human endeavour was practically unavailing, and that to all intents and purposes the mission of Christ was simply to bring mankind a promissory note of future bliss for a period of self sacrifice below. But if it be impossible to abolish slavery, the sweater, and the slum; if it be impossible to establish a condition of things under which the weak shall have the special care of the strong; if it be impossible to abolish riches and as a consequence remove poverty; to succour the aged and infirm and to bring all sick persons and young children under the special consideration of governments; if we cannot do all this and more also for humanity, the teachings of the Great Nazarene have no meaning in them, and the sooner we pull down the churches we have built for His glorification the better.

**Abuse of the
Church not
Necessary.**

There is no need, however, to pull down the churches. Rather should we seek to guide them into the light of Christian teaching. I am not concerned to deny the usefulness of the church. There is no need to do so. Nor is there any need to object to any of the formalities of worship in which Christians find pleasure. The existence of the Church does not necessarily hinder social reform. Its leaders frequently connive at the unequal distribution of God's bounties, and in some instances have gone out of their way to defend it as a holy ordinance; but that may be forgotten. Many of its most honoured servants have been standard bearers in the cause of truth. It is more charitable to judge it by the best. Let us do so in this case. It is not my function in considering this question to rail against the church. Having already hinted that in my opinion Christians should be Socialists, and having already said that Socialism is a political ideal entirely concerned with the things of this life, it becomes my duty, not only to upset the largely accepted notion that Christ's teachings have a purely spiritual

significance, but to establish a theory that they mainly pertain to this life.

I know it is the common impression that the literal acceptation of His teachings would result in incalculable hardships for

Sell all that thou hast. those who attempted to put them into practice. This I confess has a great deal of truth in it.

If in obedience to the injunction of Christ a man were to sell all that he had and to give to the poor, he would simply place himself, under existing circumstances, in a position to be victimised by the system that produces the evils he sought to relieve. And yet there is no question about the meaning of Christ's words in this particular. The story of the incident is to be found in all the gospels. The young man inquired the price of eternal life. "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" he asked. The answer he got was significant. "Thou knowest the commandments. Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and mother." Not one of these commandments quoted by Christ had other than an earthly import. The creed that Jesus recommended bore

The Creed that Jesus recommended directly on the young man's duty towards his neighbour. We are expected to believe—as no doubt is true—that Jesus Christ was as well acquainted with the laws and the covenants as

my readers are with the English alphabet: and yet out of the full store of His wisdom He enjoined obedience to a code of laws—AS THE PRICE OF ETERNAL LIFE—that never mentioned the rendering of honour to God in any degree, except in honourable

A Material Law. dealings with men. There is no suggestion of penitent forms, baptismal observances, burning of incense, or offering of sacrifices. If the New

Testament story is true—as we have already assumed—He to whom the question was put knew better than any other teacher of men what the requirements were. If Jesus were the Son of God His answer must be the final reply to all such queries; and yet, according to the Bible story, He selected a code appertaining to this life, and to this life only. He never uttered a syllable about all the fanciful doctrines, the rites and ceremonies with which we have been accustomed to associate the idea of salvation. There was not any misunderstanding, mark. The question was plain and pointed. Nothing could be more specific. This young ruler wanted eternal life, and believed that Jesus knew how it could be obtained. On the other hand, it was the mission of Christ to point the way. He was supposed to be on earth for that purpose; and His notion of salvation was wrapped up in obedience to a material law.

And this young ruler, by the way, had always been accustomed to respect these things. "All these have been kept from my youth up," he said. Then Christ

The Final Test. applied the final test "Very well," He replied, accepting the assurance, "there is yet one thing

thou lackest. Sell all that thou hast and distribute unto the

poor." Even then there was no mention of spiritual observances.

Alluding to the young man's sorrowful departure, Jesus made use of an expression that has been the cause of more intellectual wriggling than all His other sayings put together.

A Famous Illustration "It is easier" said He, "for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Now Christ either said that or the New Testament is not true; and if the New Testament is not true Jesus Christ never lived and the whole category of Christian ethics is a folly and a myth, and is not worthy of serious consideration. If Christ really said this what a terrible commentary it is on the history of the pulpit! And there is nothing in it that is not in perfect harmony with the rest of His teaching. Whenever He mentioned riches He

Christ's Hatred of Riches condemned them. In the only two parables—His favourite mode of teaching—in which He spoke of rich men He passed an awful judgment upon them. Full of compassion for the poor, He could never tolerate the rich. He made no distinction amongst them. To be rich was sufficient to merit condemnation. From the beginning to the end of His wanderings, from the first to the last of His recorded utterances Christ was at war with riches. Why? Because He recognised what the church has failed to recognise during all the centuries that have elapsed since the apostles were disbanded, that poverty is a loathsome social disease, AND THAT IF THERE WERE NO RICHES THERE WOULD BE NO POVERTY.

This law of unity, this principle of man's interdependence with its accompanying net-work of mutual obligations, is one of the great fundamentals of His gospel. He alludes to it frequently. In His parable of the judgment He maintained it. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of my children ye have done it unto me." And this bear in mind was in face of the fact that the recipients of His blessing were totally ignorant of having served Him. He distinctly teaches that many who received the reward had never rendered Him lip service. They are represented as having actually denied Him.

The Kingdom of God That kingdom then for which Christ prayed so fervently, and instructed us to pray for, is really a Kingdom to come upon earth. A perfect state of society in which there shall be no rich and no poor. A community in which consideration for the common life will be the ruling thought in individuals. A society where there shall be no hereditary rulers, no domineering officials, no idlers: where men will have to work before they are entitled to eat: where the weak and the helpless shall be the especial charge of the strong: where there shall be no grabbing for God's bounties, but where all shall partake in proportion to their wants, and where he that is most honoured shall be he who hath rendered most service to his fellows.

That such was the interpretation put upon His teaching by the apostles we have ample warrant of. It is plainly attested in the chronicle of their acts. After the death of Christ they proceeded to establish a social state which—it is only reasonable to assume—they considered would be in harmony with the spirit of His message. A sort of Communism prevailed. In the fourth chapter of The Acts we read :

**The
Apostles' in-
terpretation.**

“ And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart
“ and one soul ; neither said any of them that ought of the things
“ which he possessed was his own ; but they had all things in
“ common. . . . Neither was there any among them
“ that lacked : for as many as were possessors of land and houses
“ sold them, and brought the price of the things that were sold
“ laid it down at the apostles' feet : and distribution was made
“ unto every man according as he had need.”

That the aim of Socialism and the aim of Christianity are identical—in so far as the sayings of Christ are the keynote of Christian doctrine—is beyond dispute. But there is a vital difference between the orthodox religionist and the Socialist.

**Points of
Difference.**

The one contends that individual sanctity must precede social purity. The other aims at social regeneration as the harbinger of a perfect individualism. And the difference between Christ and the church is no less marked. However much may be said in praise of those followers of Christ whose lives were models of self-sacrifice, and whose history is the story of a constant struggle to apply the teachings of their Master to everyday life, it must be confessed that the history of the church as a body reveals an intensely human organism. Its tenets have varied with every age and in every clime. In most cases its respectability is in proportion to its wealth. It considers it quite legitimate to own land, revenues, and palaces for the accommodation of its clergy.

**The Church
and Riches.**

It accepts the gold of the profit monger and the Stock Exchange gambler with the utmost complacency. In theory it stands for human brotherhood ; but in practice it supports unblushingly every social caste that is the result of an unjust system of wealth distribution, and of popular prejudice. In America there are “ nigger ” churches for the blacks, in which a white man would disdain to worship ; and “ respectable ” churches for the whites, where the presence of a “ nigger ” would be frowned upon. In England there are the same social distinctions, the same toadying to wealth, the same hollow pretensions. On the one hand is the Band of Hope movement for the purpose of inculcating temperance principles, and on the other are the profitable investments of parsons in brewery companies.

Too frequently the gospel of the church is a gospel with the Christianity taken out of it to suit the parson's paymasters : and in no place can we find more severe condemnation of such

conduct than in the teachings of Christ Himself. He made no compromises with sin, no alliances with greed, no bargains with Mammon; and as the spirit of His teaching takes possession of the pulpit the more conscious do we become of the impossibility of accepting our commercial ethics and conniving at the terrible results of our commercial policy.

**Jesus
against caste
Distinctions.**

The chief cause, if not the sole cause of corruption in high places is the individual ownership of the sources of wealth.

**Cause of
Corruption.**

Once assume the right of one man to own wealth and you admit the right of another to seek it, and consequently promote corruption in the sphere in which it is most harmful. The state of our individual life is largely determined by the national policy; and the highest and lowest in our national life is a reflex of the individual in our midst. Each acts and re-acts upon the other. The reason the church conforms to every sort of government is not because it is intentionally hypocritical, but because, being a human institution, it is subject to the same laws of environment as humanity itself. It is practically impossible to have a healthy church under a corrupt form of government.

And any form of government fostering individualism is bound to be influenced by the evils arising out of individualism. The unceasing struggle for riches, or the power to absorb the wealth created by another, either wholly or partially, and by

**The
Mainspring.**

whatever means, produces vicious results on the national character. It has a demoralising effect on the mass of the people, and it makes it easier for the few to retain their unjust privileges. The driving force in human society, the motive power underlying all human activity is the attainment of social honour and distinction. There are, of course, exceptions to the rule, but these are few and isolated. The rule holds good in the great majority of instances, and the reason men seek for riches is because the possession of them is nearly always certain to assist them in gaining the coveted prize: hence the universal clamouring for gold. In this one thing lies the cause of untold human misery, and the remedy lies in removing the cause.

Professor Huxley once declared that having had an opportunity of studying savage life in its most degraded forms he was of opinion that at its worst it was preferable to the bestial conditions of life in a London slum. The greatest

**Loaves and
Fishes.**

evangelist of the nineteenth century, after twenty years of missionary work in the East End, publicly acknowledged the futility of preaching the gospel of Christ to ragged people with empty stomachs. Christ Himself, before He preached His sermon on the Mount, fed the multitude on loaves and fishes. At almost every turn this fact presents itself. The degradation of character, as a result of unhealthy physical conditions, is the one thing above all others that Socialologists are impressed with; and, as I have already

indicated, poverty and riches are the natural corollary of each other. If there were no rich there would be no poor, and if there were no poor the manifold vices arising out of poverty would be unknown.

And what applies in one case will apply with equal force in another. There are vices peculiar to the rich. They result chiefly from the lack of healthy employment for both body and mind, and they would naturally disappear if the necessity to render service for benefits received were a feature of human intercourse.

Vices of the Rich.

In like manner the system of "trade" under which men are literally compelled to practice every deception imaginable, in order to outwit their fellows in the struggle for riches, renders the attainment of a Christian life practically impossible. Just imagine a man living a life according to Christian ethics under existing conditions! It is inconceivable. And yet Christ urged the practice of His teachings. Did He urge the impossible? I think not.

The unequal distribution of wealth, then, is the root cause of crime and distress. Thousands of little children go hungry to school every morning in the heart of "Christian" England. Their mothers struggle with fate for a while in the sweat-shops of the Metropolis, then finally succumb to the terrible strain, and abandon themselves to sin and despair. In some parts of London there are houses standing empty for lack of "respectable" tenants to fill them; and in other parts of the same city there are as many as seventeen human beings living in one room. What kind of Christianity is possible there?

The Slums.

The national hunger for profits knows no rest, day or night. The people are crowded together in filthy rookeries that pitiless landlords may get enormous rents. There is one case on record where a man draws thirty-six shillings per week for a six-roomed tenement in a dirty alley where the light of day seldom if ever appears. Women are known to work as many as seventeen hours for a shilling, making trousers. Others work almost as many for sixpence, making shirts. Matchbox makers make 144 matchboxes for 2½d., and provide their own paste out of that. And the men and women who make huge profits from the sweated labour of these children of men often loll in cushioned pews in a fashionable church on the Sabbath, listening to meaningless platitudes about the goodness of God, and the beauty of life. "What would Jesus do" about it all? We cannot say, but if the story of His life be true, we are justified in thinking that He would not allow His reputed followers to go unrebuked for their attitude of indifference towards the cause of all this misery.

The Hunger for Profits.

The only thing needful now to establish my case is to prove that Socialism, or the collective ownership of the means of life,

will assist us in attaining a higher moral plane; and perhaps the easiest and most intelligible method of establishing the theory is to point to the lessons of history. Originally, man is supposed to have been a brute. Even accepting the Bible story of the Creation, he was almost entirely bereft of morality after his fall. If the "Lord's chosen people" are to be taken as a criterion, man was an unjust and revengeful savage. The history of mankind is the story of a perpetual striving for social freedom, and a constant rebellion against the injustice of individual rule. Slowly but surely men have become more democratic in their instincts. The desire to live and enjoy life has been gradually tinged with a desire to assist other people to do likewise. The gratification of personal whims was at one time the ruling passion with the individual. He is now guided in a greater or less degree by consideration for others, or by respect for the edicts forbidding him to interfere with the rights of his neighbour. And contrary to popular opinion this higher plane of politics and religion has not been reached by means of individual purification, but by means of collective resistance of wrong and physical opposition to injustice. Centuries ago men's notions of spiritual life were regulated according to specified rule. Their worship of the Almighty was expected to be in harmony with the laws laid down by their clerical taskmasters, who claimed exclusive right to interpret the scriptures to them, and more especially arrogated to themselves the right to determine what was the duty of the people towards "God's chosen representatives below."

Now it was this latter claim: this attempt to interfere with material things that gave rise to rebellion. The men who resisted the dominance of the clergy did so because of purely material considerations; and were not one whit less bigoted in their religious notions than the men whom they opposed. Nevertheless, they established the right of the individual to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, with the further result that religious people became more tolerant of each other's views.

In the same way the collective effort of the people abolished despotism. Even a humane despot was not considered a sufficient excuse for courting the possibilities of a brutal one: hence the foundation of democratic government, and the establishment of political liberty.

So on throughout the ages, men have always aimed at suppressing individualism. The words freedom and liberty are purely relative terms. In the Southern States of America the blacks are nominally free; but the government is frequently helpless—in the face of an unruly mob—to prevent an unpopular negro from being unjustly lynched. Now there is no freedom in a case of

**Man
originally
a brute.**

**Collective
Operation.**

**Religious
Equality
Established.**

**Abolition of
Despotism.**

**Freedom
and Liberty.**

that kind. There can be no liberty unless there is automatic restraint placed upon the unruly. Morality, we are told, is obedience to the natural law; but there is no law unnatural unless it is imposed upon one class by another. That which is the outcome of a common intelligence seldom, if ever, inflicts misery; but the operation of a code that has been established in the interests of a class almost invariably promotes injustice.

I frequently find that men's aversion to Socialism is the fear of being constantly under the finger and thumb of "Government." But that is a purely imaginary objection. If government were automatic and uniform it would be reduced to a minimum by natural process. Government is only pernicious in proportion to its eccentricity; and its eccentricity arises out of the conflicting interests of private property.

An excellent example of the religious freedom for instance that will be possible under a Socialist regime is to be found in the English Free Church movement. Here you have a case where—in spite of the religion provided for them by the State, and supported out of the public purse—men prefer the luxury of a creed of their own, and voluntarily support their own pastors. That is exactly the rule I should imagine would prevail under Socialism. There would be no "recognised" form of worship. Every sect would be placed on an equal footing, and the support of the clerics would depend entirely on the number of people accepting their teaching.

The individual ownership of the means of life, however, is entirely another matter. As I have already shown, this practice and the considerations surrounding it are responsible for a great deal of human misery; and the fearful condition of human society is in turn responsible for a great deal of human error. Surely, then, it is not illogical to argue that the best way to remedy the disease is to take away the means of its production. The factory system in England is much superior to that of most countries, and the reason is because the will of the people—as voiced in the Public Health Acts—insists on it being so. When the industrial life of the populace was a matter of individual concern on the part of employers, the standard of life was much lower than it is to-day. State interference and the organised efforts of the workers themselves have done much to eliminate the worst features of the system, and to establish instead a more humane form of industrial government.

This collective operation, be it remembered, is only another name for what we call Socialism.

It cannot be too persistently kept in view that unmitigated individualism does not exist, except in some undiscovered part of the globe. Wherever there is organised society, however

Individualism Impossible. crude, wherever two men come together and agree to act conjointly, according to some recognised plan, there is an element of Socialism : and those countries in which the greatest happiness obtains for the greatest number are those in which there has been the nearest approach to the Socialist ideal.

This is the reason therefore why we think that Christians should be Socialists. The principle applied will improve the conditions of life. It will elevate the struggle for existence. The reading of history justifies the assumption. All the progress

Cause of Progress. that has been made during the centuries gone by can be traced to the application of this policy. Sometimes consciously, more often unconsciously, we have put into practice the principle of state interference, and in no case has it been found to fail.

It has not produced miraculous changes. We do not expect such of it. Man as he is to-day, both at his best and at his worst, is the result of being subject for generations to the laws of environment. It will take time and patience

The Final Outcome. to change the old Adam within us : and the ingrained selfishness with which we are all more or less afflicted, can only be uprooted by gradual process. But I have no hesitation in thinking that when we discover that individual happiness will be the result of the common well-being, the purification of the common life will be our chief consideration. We cannot conceive, of course, what the exact condition of society will be when all men shall have equal access to things needful, and equal opportunities for the attainment of social honour and distinction ; but we are perfectly justified in believing that as a consequence of it men will begin to aim at the attainment of that higher life that has been the dream of philosophers and the hope of seers from time immemorial.

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